

Attracting Honey and Native Bees to your Garden



What are the top five plants for attracting bees to a garden? I wish it were that simple, but it takes more than just a few key plants to really attract bees and other pollinators. Bees need food, water, shelter, and a place to raise their young.

- Flowers that provide nectar and pollen are the most attractive to bees.
- Gardens with 10 or more species of attractive plants will have the largest number of bees.
- It is important to plant flowers that bloom successively over the spring, summer, and fall seasons in order to provide pollen and nectar resources to the native bees of all seasons.
- Large swaths of one single plant type are the most attractive to bees because they do not mix pollen when foraging.
- Bees prefer blue and violet flowers, also yellow flowers which they see as blue.
- Most native bees are solitary nest makers and build their nests in the ground or in pre-existing cavities. Provide nesting blocks like the ones we showed you today, leave bundles of hollow sticks, and leave bare patches of soil or sand in your garden.
- Bees will not dig through mulch to nest.

The links below provide plant lists sure to attract bees to your garden.

<http://nature.berkeley.edu/urbanbeegardens/gbt.html>

<http://nature.berkeley.edu/urbanbeegardens/list.html>

<http://www.themelissagarden.com/plants.html>

http://www.yerbabuenanursery.com/BayAreaBeeList_study.php